

Notre Dame/DFAA Lacrosse Mentoring



South Bend Community School Corp/ Dickinson Fine Arts



WE ARE Dickinson Fine Arts Academy, a 5-8 Fine Arts magnet middle school serving 640 students on the western end of South Bend, IN.

OUR STUDENTS & FAMILIES Dickinson's students are 45% African-American, 24% white, 20% Hispanic, and 10% mixed race. Approximately 10% of our students are EL. Nearly all of these are Spanish-speaking. One fourth of the student population is Fine Arts magnet students from all over South Bend.

OUR TEACHERS Dickinson's academic faculty consists of 42 grade-level and Related Arts teachers. Our professional staff has received training in fine arts integration, STEAM, and gender-based learning.

OUR PROMISING PRACTICE Students identified by their teachers as being in need of positive male role models are paired with players on the University of Notre Dame's Men's Lacrosse team. Students meet with mentors before school weekly and attend field trips to events around the community and at Notre Dame. By pairing our young men with successful Notre Dame student-athletes, we give them a glimpse of what academic life past high school could look like for them and provide them with a mentor close to their age who they are able to interact with in a mutually beneficial way.

OUR STEPS The program is a partnership between the University of Notre Dame Lacrosse team and DFAA. The mentoring program lasts for the duration of the Lacrosse sports season. In addition, many of the mentors continue to stay in contact with their mentees during the offseason as well. This is the fourth year of the Lacrosse mentorship program at DFAA.

OUR SOURCES Notre Dame performed a survey that revealed that students that participated in the mentoring program showed higher attendance, improved grades, and a reduction in negative behaviors in class. Students also demonstrated a stronger attachment to school and an increased interest in post-secondary education.